



AT THE HAND OF THANOS!
THE DEATH OF...

SPIDER-MAN[®]

\$1.75 US

\$2.15 CAN

17

DEC

UK 95p

APPROVED
BY THE
COMICS
CODE
AUTHORITY

YOU WILL
BELIEVE
A MAN CAN
DIE!



LEONARDO
WU

30TH
ANNIVERSARY



THE
FANTASTIC
FOUR
1961-1991



GOTTA GET
THE BARBEQUE
SAUCE TO
AUNT MAY'S.

GOTTA
PICK UP
MARY JANE.

HOPE THAT
LAST RENT
CHECK ISN'T
A RUBBER
ONE.

GOTTA
FILL UP
ON WEB
FLUID.

UH-OH.

THERE--!
A DISASTER
IN THE
MAKING!

ONE READY-
MADE HERO
TO THE KNEE-
JERK
RESCUE!

THWIP!

Stan
Lee
PRESENTS

NO ONE
GETS
OUTTA
HERE
ALIVE!

SPIDER-MAN® Vol. 1, No. 17, December 1991, (ISSN# 1053-5667) Published by MARVEL COMICS, Terry Stewart, President, Stan Lee, Publisher, Michael Hobson, Group Vice President, Publishing, OFFICE OF PUBLICATION: 387 PARK AVENUE SOUTH, NEW YORK, NY 10016. SECOND CLASS POSTAGE PAID AT NEW YORK, NY AND AT ADDITIONAL MAILING OFFICES. Published monthly. Copyright © 1991 Marvel Entertainment Group, Inc. All rights reserved. Price \$1.75 per copy in the U.S. and \$2.15 in Canada. Subscription rate for 12 issues: \$21.00 U.S., \$33.00 foreign; and Canadian subscribers must add \$8.00 for postage and GST. GST #R127032852. No similarity between any of the names, characters, persons, and/or institutions in this magazine with those of any living or dead person or institution is intended, and any such similarity which may exist is purely coincidental. This periodical may not be sold except by authorized dealers and is sold subject to the condition that it shall not be sold or distributed with any part of its cover or markings removed, nor in a mutilated condition. SPIDER-MAN (including all prominent characters featured in this issue and the distinctive likenesses thereof) is a trademark of MARVEL ENTERTAINMENT GROUP, INC. POSTMASTER: SEND ADDRESS CHANGES TO SPIDER-MAN, c/o MARVEL COMICS, 9TH FLOOR, 387 PARK AVENUE SOUTH, NEW YORK, NY 10016. PRINTED IN CANADA.

ANN NOCENTI - WRITER
RICK LEONARDI - PENCILS
AL WILLIAMSON - INKS
CHRIS ELIOPOULOS - LETTERS
GREGORY WRIGHT - COLORS
DANNY FINGEROTH - EDITOR
TOM DEFALCO - CHIEF

HAND
MOMMA A
CLOTHESPIN,
BABY.

WOW!

YOU HEAR
ME, GIRL?

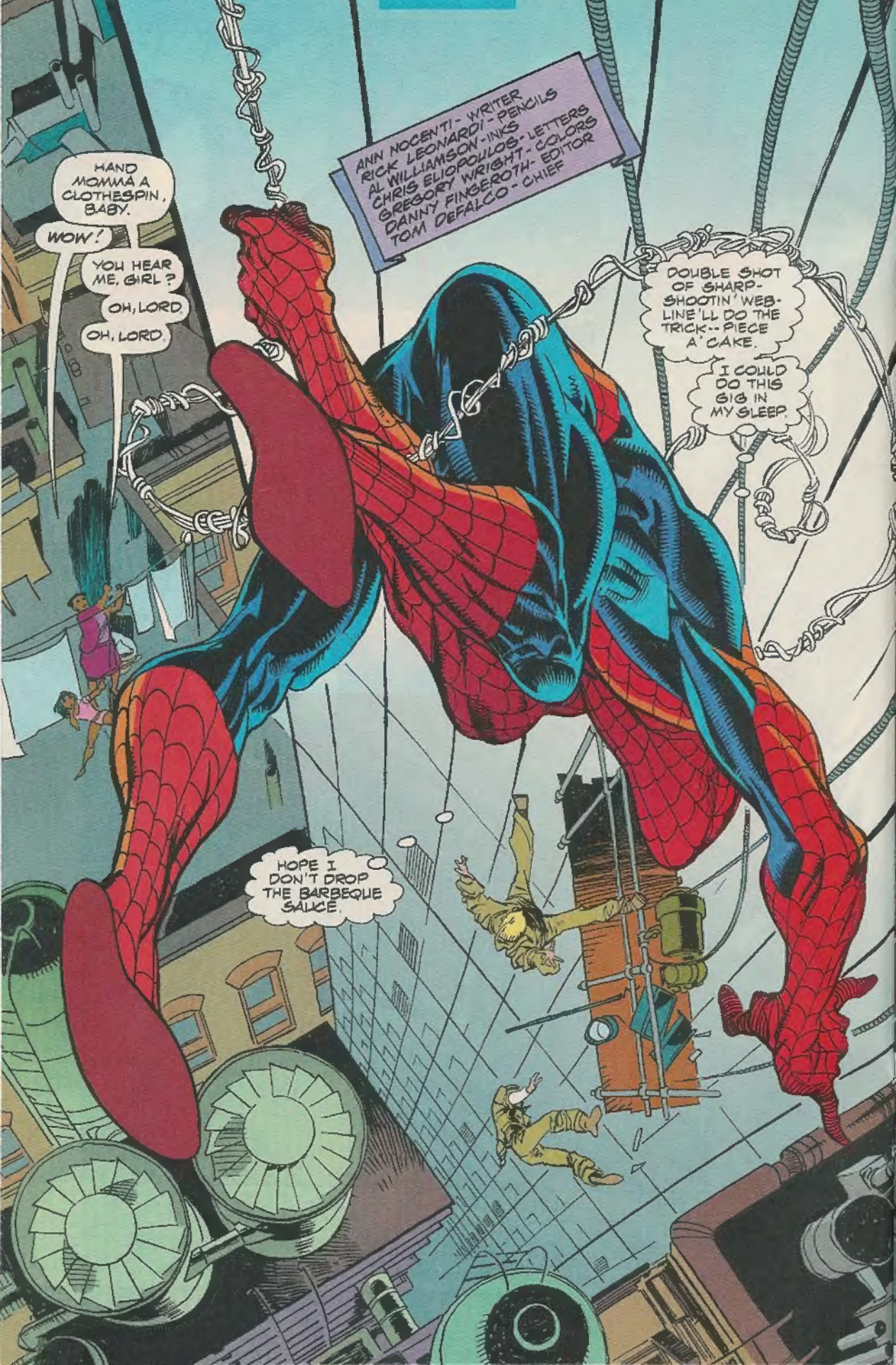
OH, LORD.

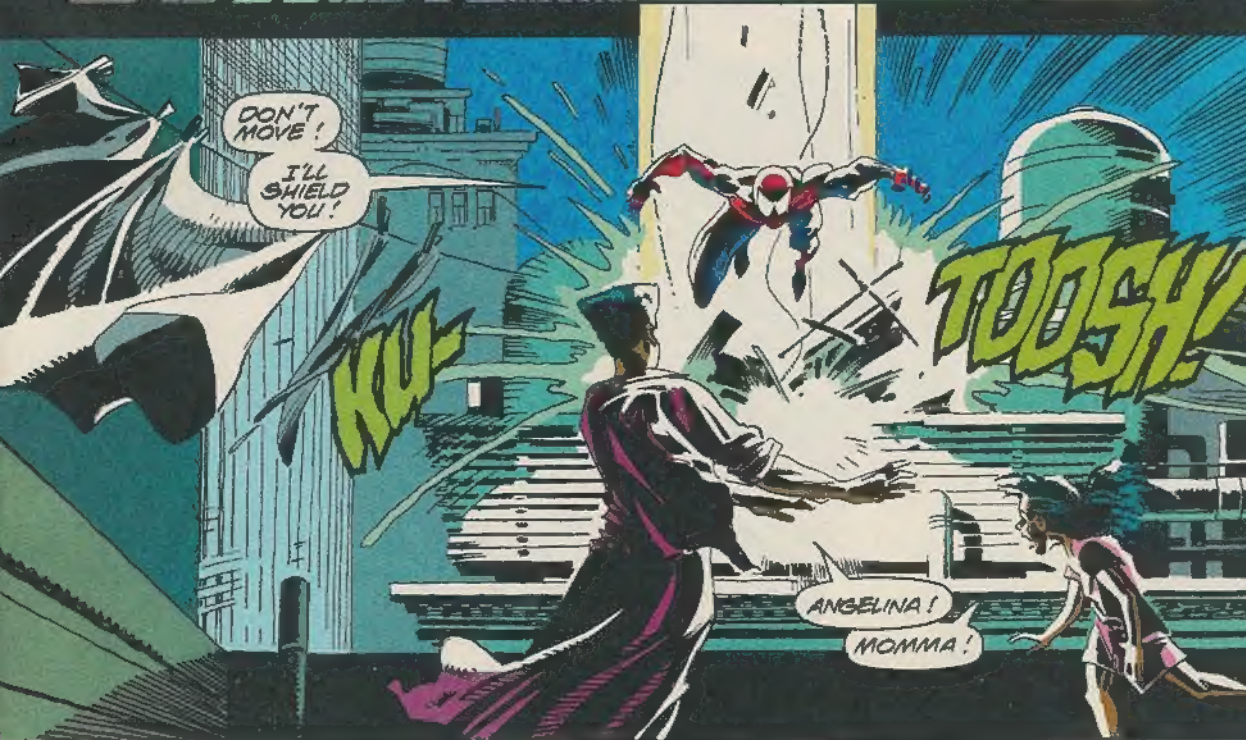
OH, LORD.


DOUBLE SHOT
OF SHARP-
SHOOTIN' WEB-
LINE 'LL DO THE
TRICK-- PIECE
A' CAKE.

I COULD
DO THIS
SIG IN
MY SLEEP.

HOPE I
DON'T DROP
THE BARBEQUE
SAUCE.







IT IMPACTS
LIKE A TRAIN
WRECK.

THE ICY FROST WRAPS
SPIDER-MAN'S MORTAL
FLESH IN A CRYOGENIC
CRYPT.

THE SHOCKBLAST FEELS
HIS COSTUME OFF HIS
FACE AND LIMBS, AND
ICICLE FINGERS REACH
TO CARESS HIS HEART.

TEN SECONDS BEFORE HIS
HEART STOPS, SPIDER-MAN
THINKS: "I CAN'T BE DYING,
MY LIFE ISN'T FLASHING
BEFORE MY EYES... BUT THAT
MIGHT BE BECAUSE MY
EYEBALLS FEEL LIKE PEELED
GRAPES."

FIVE SECONDS BEFORE HIS
HEART STOPS, HE THINKS: "THAT
WASN'T FUNNY. WHY MUST I
END MY LIFE WITH ANOTHER
JOKE? THERE ARE NO MORE
JOKES."

TWO SECONDS BEFORE
HIS HEART STOPS, HE
REMEMBERS A BUDDHIST
PARABLE ABOUT TIGERS
AND STRAWBERRIES:
"HOW DID THAT STORY
GO?"

HIS HEART, BY NOW A
SMALL FRIGHTENED
MOUSE CRINGING
INSIDE HIS RIB CAGE,
FEELS THE FIRST
FINGERTIP OF ICE.

HE HITS THE
ROOF.

HE LOOKS
BEAUTIFUL,
AND AT
PEACE.

OH, I REMEMBER.

A MAN IS CHASED BY TIGERS TO THE EDGE OF A CLIFF. HE FLINGS HIMSELF OFF, HANGING BY A STRAWBERRY VINE. HE SEES ANOTHER HUNGRY TIGER BELOW HIM.

HE HEARS A NIBBLING SOUND, AND SEES TWO MICE CHEWING THROUGH THE VINE.

HE PICKS A STRAWBERRY, PUTS IT IN HIS MOUTH, AND LETS GO OF THE VINE.

HOW SWEET IT TASTED!

EVEN NOW, I FEEL HIM WORRYING ABOUT SAVING SOMEONE.

NO, THE WOMAN'S FINE.

POOR PETER PARKER.

WELL, YOU DIDN'T LIVE LIKE THAT, AND YOU DIDN'T DIE LIKE THAT.

WORRY, WORRY. THAT'S ALL YOU DID.

YOU JUST DIDN'T GET IT, DID YOU?

STRANGE, DEATH IS
SO ... INDIFFERENT.

I FEEL SO PEACEFUL!
AND SO HAPPY.

HUH. FUNNY. DEATH
IS JUST NO BIG
DEAL.

JUST A SIMPLE,
GENTLE STEP.

I FEEL BAD
ABOUT MY
BODY, THOUGH.
POOR GUY.

HE TRIED SO
HARD, BUT HE
REALLY DIDN'T
GET IT, DID HE?

I COULD SHOW
HIM, HOW EASY
IT COULD BE...

EMOTIONS...
THEY'RE ALL
THE SAME
JUICE.

YOU CAN SLIP
FROM WORRY
TO ANGER TO
LOVE TO JOY SO
EASILY!

BUT NO ONE
DOES. THEY
STAY STUCK
IN THE BAD
JUICE, LIKE
SADNESS, OR
LIKE PETER,
STUCK IN
WORRY AND
GUILT.

LIKE HE'S GOT
A BIG BURDEN
ON HIS BACK,
BUT IF HE
COULD ONLY
TURN AROUND
AND SEE THE
BURDEN IS
ONLY WINGS!

WE'RE PRISONERS,
WHO CAN'T SEE
THEIR OWN WINGS.



HUH?

A BABY'S
SCREAM!
AND...

WHAT'S THAT?
MOM!

MOM!? IS
THAT YOU?

GONE.

:(SIGH):

I STARTED LIFE
WITH A SCREAM
AND ENDED WITH
A SIGH.

WOW-- I WONDER
IF I'LL SEE HER
UP HERE.

STRANGE. I THOUGHT
I LOVED MARY JANE.
BUT NOW... ALL I CAN
THINK OF IS MY FIRST...
MY ONLY... MY BEAUTIFUL
GWEN STACY.

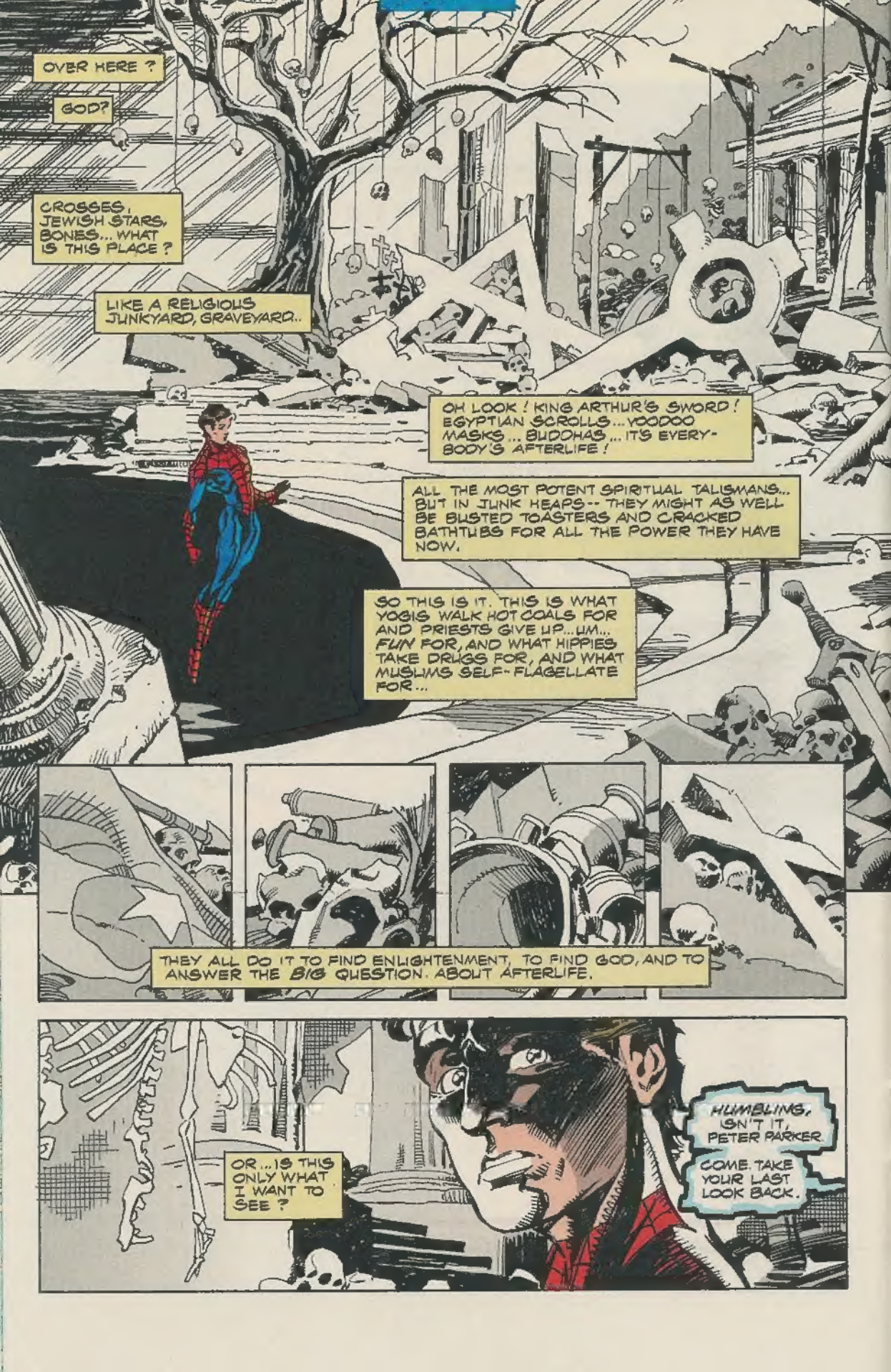
IT'S GETTING SO
BRIGHT... WOW!
LOOK AT THAT!

A LIGHT
SO WHITE!

I'VE HEARD ABOUT THIS!
PEOPLE WHO HAVE NEAR-
DEATH EXPERIENCES TALK
OF SEEING A BRILLIANT
WHITE LIGHT!

OH, IT'S BEAUTIFUL!
I'VE GOT TO GO
TOWARDS IT!

WAIT-- I HEAR
SOMEONE
CALLING ME!

A large comic book panel showing Spider-Man in a red and blue suit standing in a dark, cluttered junkyard. The ground is covered with various religious and cultural symbols, including crosses, Jewish stars, skulls, and a large gear. In the background, there are skeletal remains of people and structures. Spider-Man is looking around, and several speech bubbles contain his dialogue.

OVER HERE ?

GOD?

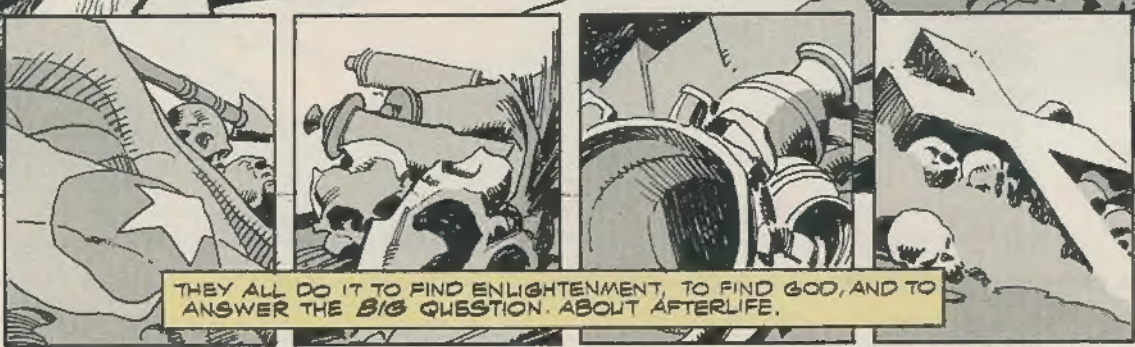
CROSSES,
JEWISH STARS,
BONES... WHAT
IS THIS PLACE ?

LIKE A RELIGIOUS
JUNKYARD, GRAVEYARD...


OH LOOK ! KING ARTHUR'S SWORD !
EGYPTIAN SCROLLS... VODOO
MASKS ... BUDDHAS ... IT'S EVERY-
BODY'S AFTERLIFE !

ALL THE MOST POTENT SPIRITUAL TALISMANS...
BUT IN JUNK HEAPS-- THEY MIGHT AS WELL
BE BUSTED TOASTERS AND CRACKED
BATHTUBS FOR ALL THE POWER THEY HAVE
NOW.

SO THIS IS IT. THIS IS WHAT
YOGIS WALK HOT COALS FOR
AND PRIESTS GIVE UP... UM...
FUN FOR, AND WHAT HIPPIES
TAKE DRUGS FOR, AND WHAT
MUSLIMS SELF-FLAGELLATE
FOR...

Four small, square panels arranged horizontally, each showing a different religious symbol: a skull, a cross, a gear, and a skull.


THEY ALL DO IT TO FIND ENLIGHTENMENT, TO FIND GOD, AND TO
ANSWER THE BIG QUESTION. ABOUT AFTERLIFE.

A large panel showing a close-up of Spider-Man's face in profile, looking towards the left. He has a serious expression. The background is dark and filled with skeletal remains and religious symbols.

OR... IS THIS
ONLY WHAT
I WANT TO
SEE ?

HUMBLING,
ISN'T IT,
PETER PARKER

COME TAKE
YOUR LAST
LOOK BACK.

A comic book panel showing Thanos, Death, and Spider-Man. Thanos, a large purple-skinned figure with a yellow and black striped tunic and a wide yellow sash, stands in the background. He has a yellow horned helmet and a stern expression. To his right, Death, a pale figure in a purple hooded cloak, holds a golden skull with multiple eyes. In the foreground, Spider-Man, in his red and blue suit, is crouching and looking up at them. The ground is covered in a pile of human skulls and bones. The background shows a simple stone wall.

EVERYONE
GETS ONE
LAST LOOK.

COME,
SPIDER-
MAN.

DEATH AND I,
WE HAVE BEEN
WAITING FOR
YOU.

THANOS...?

YES,
THANOS!

I THOUGHT
YOU WERE...
DEAD.



THE IDEA IS ..
IRRELEVANT.

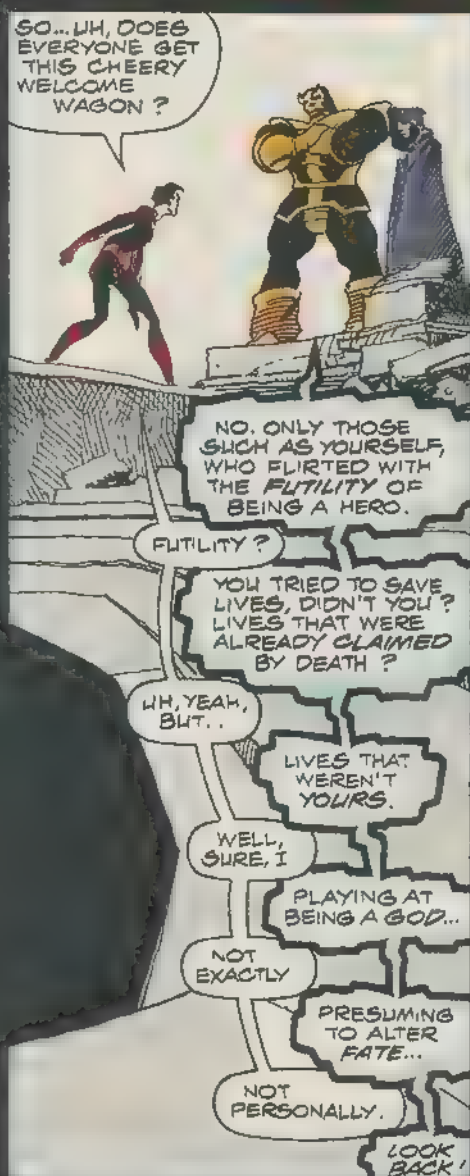
YOL, PETER
PARKER, IT IS
YOU WHO ARE
DEAD.

WHEREAS
I SERVE
DEATH

I LOVE
DEATH, I
WIELD DEATH,
I CREATE
DEATH

BUT I
CANNOT
DIE.

UH... I SEE THE
DIFFERENCE



SO... UH, DOES
EVERYONE GET
THIS CHEERY
WELCOME
WAGON ?

NO. ONLY THOSE
SUCH AS YOURSELF,
WHO FLIRTED WITH
THE FUTILITY OF
BEING A HERO.

FUTILITY ?

YOU TRIED TO SAVE
LIVES, DIDN'T YOU ?
LIVES THAT WERE
ALREADY CLAIMED
BY DEATH ?

UH, YEAH,
BUT...

LIVES THAT
WEREN'T
YOURS.

WELL,
SURE, I

PLAYING AT
BEING A GOD...

NOT
EXACTLY

PRESUMING
TO ALTER
FATE...

NOT
PERSONALLY.

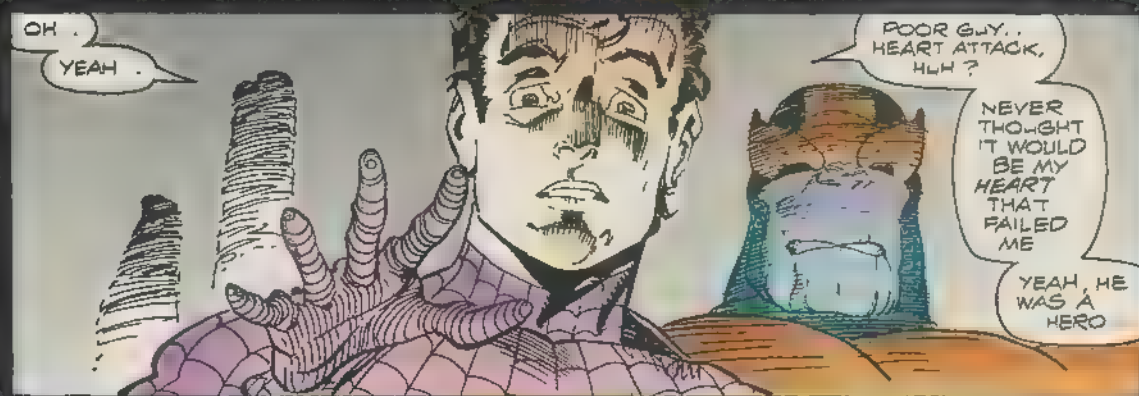
LOOK
BACK !



UH, YES
SIR

YOU WHO
CALLED
YOURSELF
A HERO..

--LOOK AT
YOURSELF !



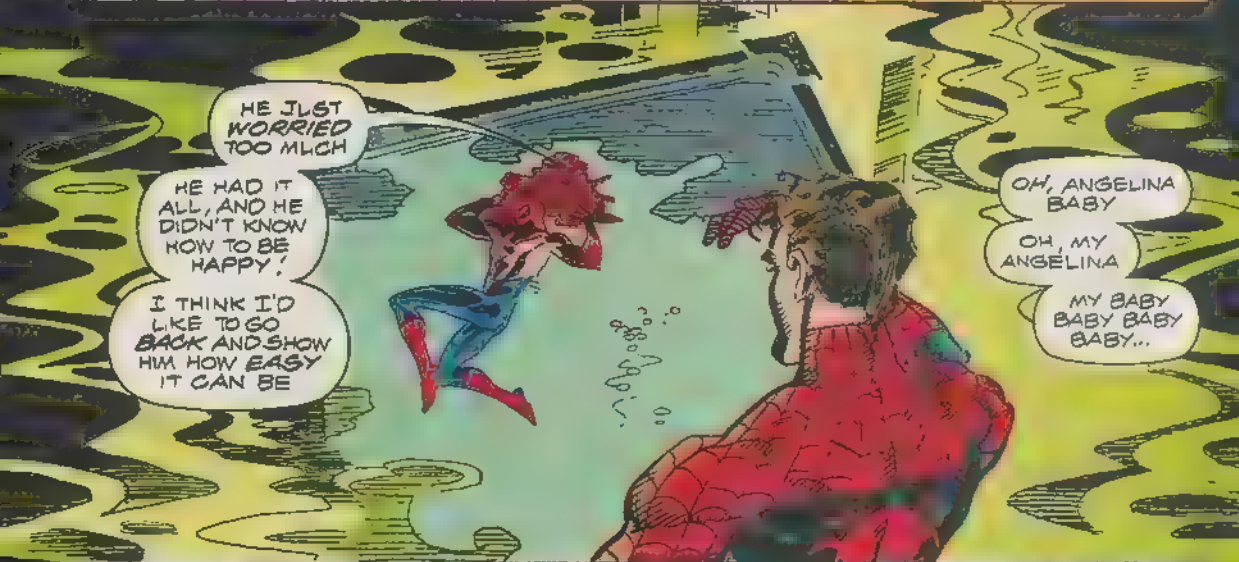
OH .

YEAH .

POOR GUY...
HEART ATTACK,
HLLH ?

NEVER
THOUGHT
IT WOULD
BE MY
HEART
THAT
FAILED
ME

YEAH, HE
WAS A
HERO



HE JUST
WORRIED
TOO MUCH

HE HAD IT
ALL, AND HE
DIDN'T KNOW
HOW TO BE
HAPPY.

I THINK I'D
LIKE TO GO
BACK AND SHOW
HIM HOW EASY
IT CAN BE

OH, ANGELINA
BABY

OH, MY
ANGELINA

MY BABY
BABY BABY
BABY...



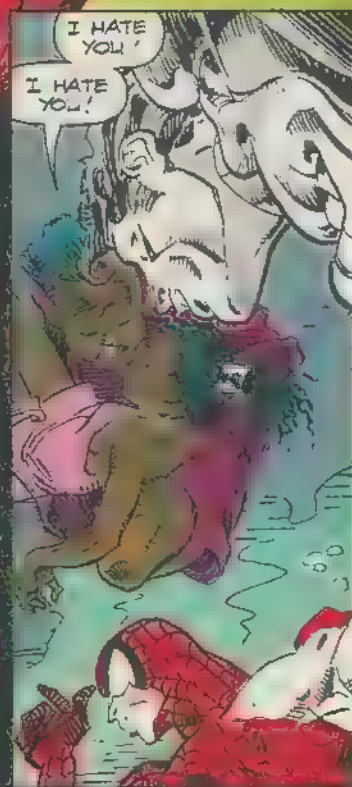
WHO'S THAT
CRYING ?

I SAVED THE
WOMAN... OH, NO--
WHERE'S THE
LITTLE GIRL ?



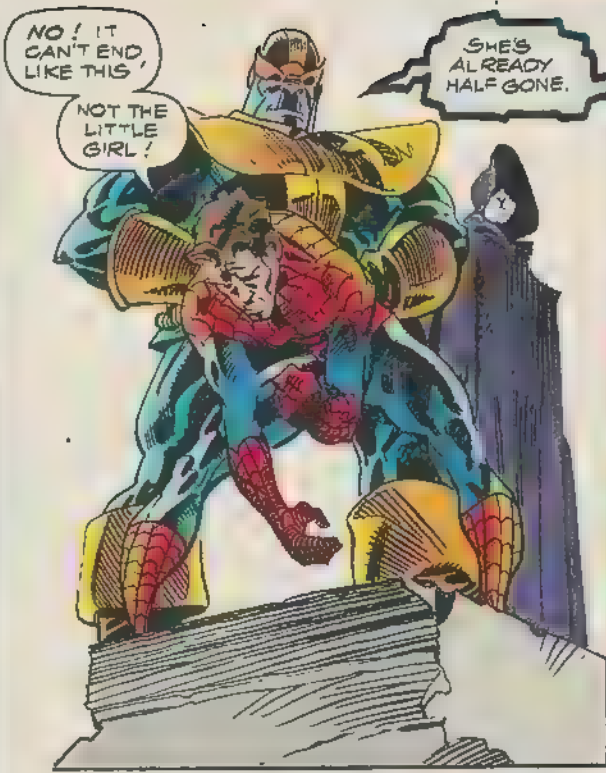
WHY ?! WHY
DID YOU SAVE
ME AND NOT
MY ANGELINA ?!

I HATE
YOU, SPIDER-
MAN



I HATE
YOU !

I HATE
YOU !



NO! IT
CAN'T END
LIKE THIS!
NOT THE
LITTLE
GIRL!

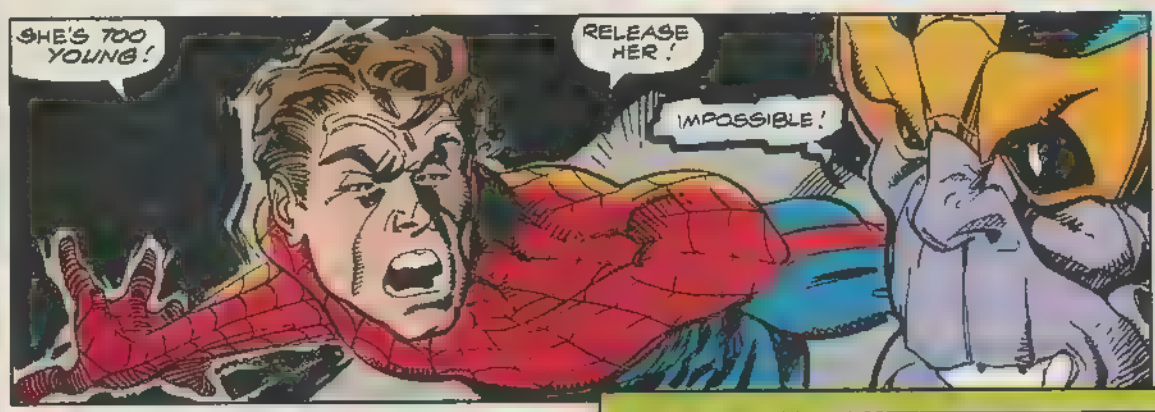
SHE'S
ALREADY
HALF GONE.



HALF
THERE

HALF
HERE

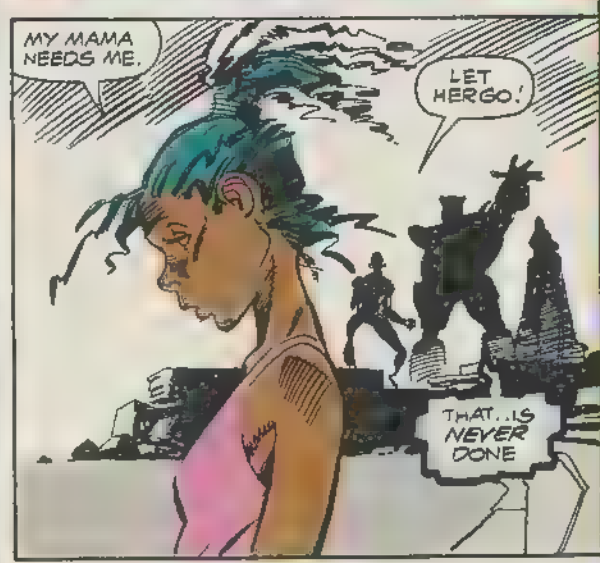
POOR
MAMA
LET HER
GO BACK!



SHE'S TOO
YOUNG!

RELEASE
HER!

IMPOSSIBLE!



MY MAMA
NEEDS ME.

LET
HER GO!

THAT...IS
NEVER
DONE



RELEASE
HER!

NEVER.



I KNOW
WHAT YOU'RE
THINKING
OF DOING
AND
YOU'D BE
A FOOL--



SO
WHAT?!



KR PKOW!



HAHAHA
HAHAHA!

SO YOU KEEP
PUNCHING, YOU
POOR SOUL!

NOTHING
IS SOLVED
PHYSICALLY
IN THIS
REALM!

YOUR HEROICS
ARE POINT-
LESS.

YOU'RE DEAD.
YOU SHOULD
BE ENLIGHTENED
TO ALL THIS

BEYOND
DEATH, THERE
IS NO WILL,
NO DESIRE.

IT'S TOO
LATE

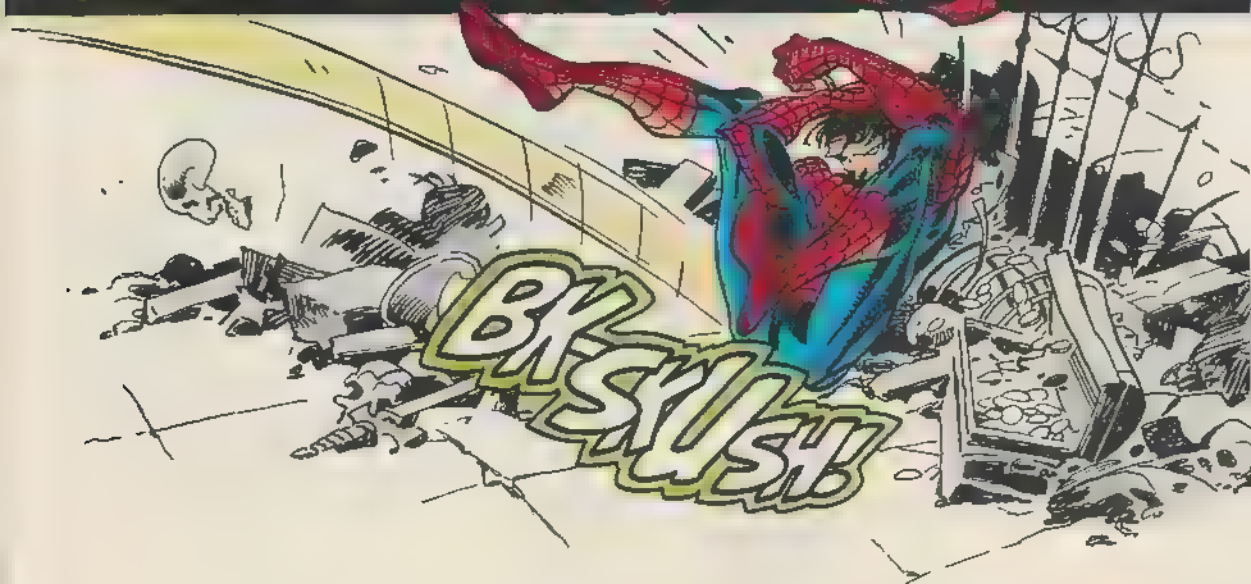
YOU CAN'T
SAVE
ANYONE
ANYMORE

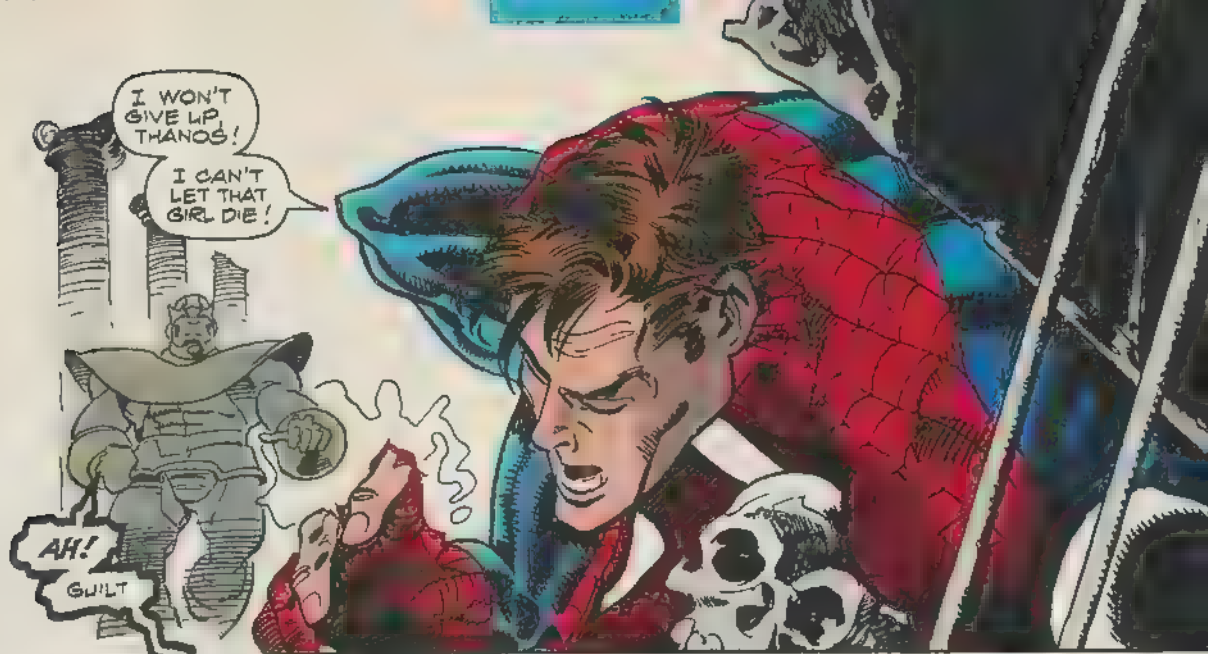
YOU'RE TRYING
TO DO THE
IMPOSSIBLE.

YEAH?

SO WHAT.

SO WHAT?





I WON'T
GIVE UP,
THANOS!

I CAN'T
LET THAT
GIRL DIE!

AH!
GUILT



A BRAIN
OF GUILT...



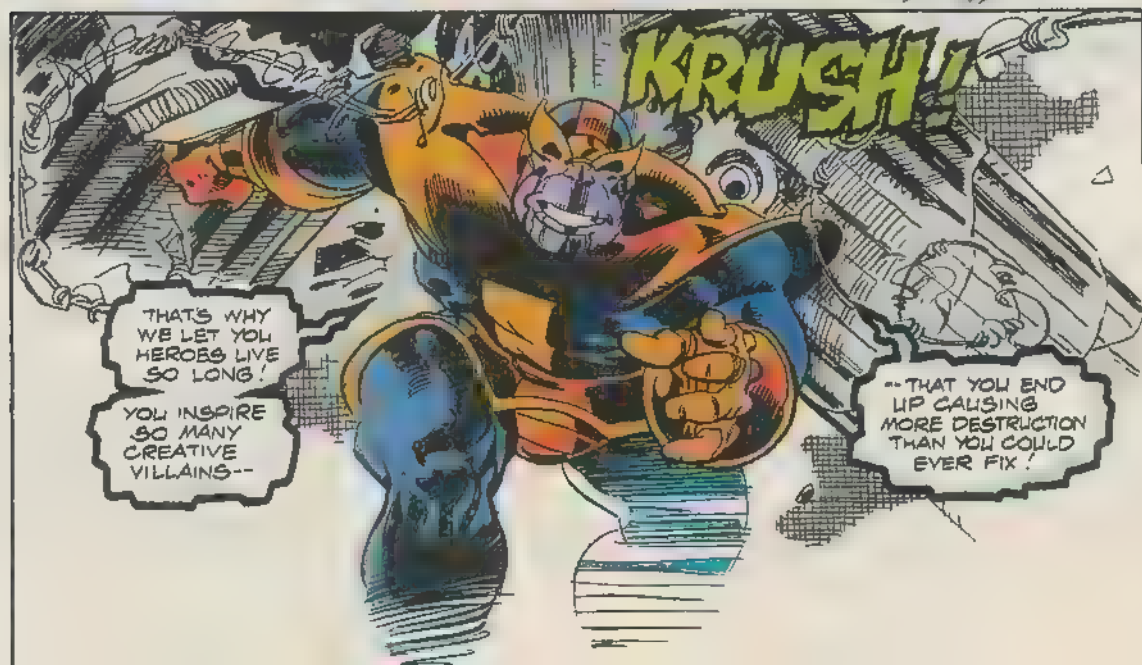
YOU
REALIZE,
SPIDER-
MAN--

-- THAT GREAT
HEROES INSPIRE
GREAT
VILLAINY ?



OH, YEAH ?

YANK!



KRUSH!

THAT'S WHY
WE LET YOU
HEROES LIVE
SO LONG!

YOU INSPIRE
SO MANY
CREATIVE
VILLAINS--

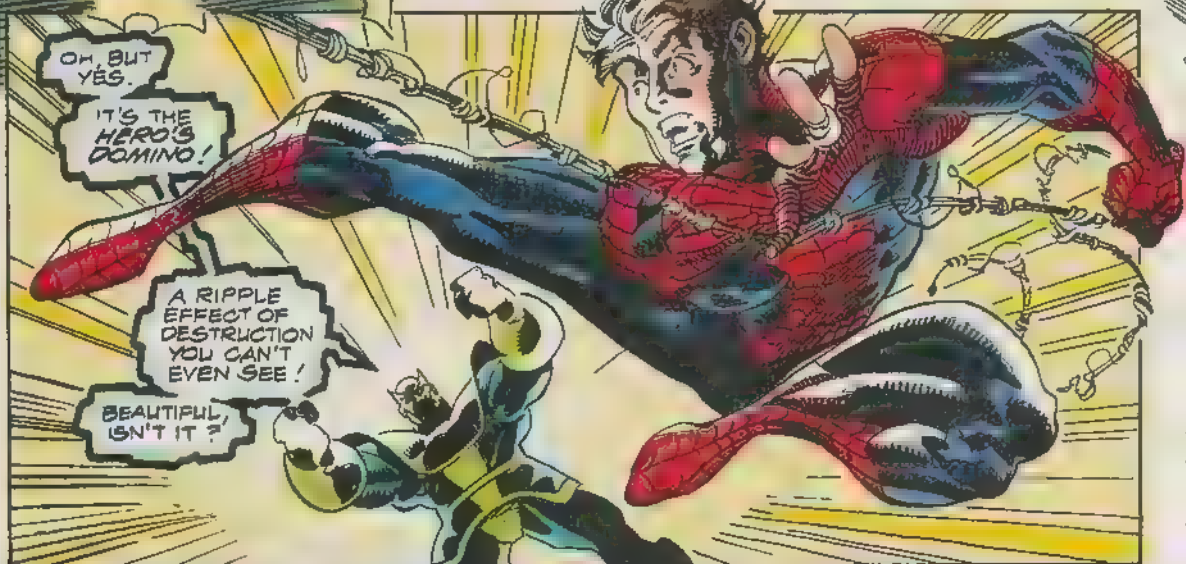
-- THAT YOU END
UP CAUSING
MORE DESTRUCTION
THAN YOU COULD
EVER FIX!



YOUR EVERY
HEROIC ACT--

--ENDS UP
CAUSING
MULTIPLE
DEATHS!

NO!



OH, BUT
YES.

IT'S THE
HERO'S
DOMINO!

A RIPPLE
EFFECT OF
DESTRUCTION
YOU CAN'T
EVEN SEE!

BEAUTIFUL,
ISN'T IT?

NO! IT'S
NOT TRUE!

YOU'RE
TRYING TO
TRICK ME!
DEFEAT ME!

SURE I'M
GUILT-RIDDEN
AND I WORRY
MYSELF CRAZY.

BUT, UNDER-
NEATH... IN MY
BONES... I
KNOW I DO
GOOD--

--AND THAT
YOU'RE A
LIAR.

YOU WILL ALWAYS
WONDER, SPIDER-
MAN, ABOUT WHAT
I SAY.

ABOUT THE
FUTILITY OF
HEROICS, BUT...

YOUR MIND, YOUR
THOUGHTS ARE NEVER-
THELESS SO SMALL.

LET ME SHOW YOU
HOW INSIGNIFICANT
YOU ARE.

WHAT
ARE YOU
SQUEAKING
ABOUT?

OH, YEAH, THANOS?
YOU HAVE TO
GROW HUGE TO
MAKE ME FEEL
SMALL?

SUCH A PHYSICAL
SHOW, FOR A REALM
WHERE SUCH THINGS
AS PUNCHES DON'T
MATTER.

SEEMS TO ME,
THANOS, THAT YOU'VE
JUST FALTERED
IN THE GAME.

HEY!

EH?

DEATH
MY LOVE

YOU ARE
EVER SO
SILENT.

WHY DO YOU
STARE AT
ME SO?

AS IF... AS IF
I HAVE MISSED
SOMETHING...

HAH! SEE, THANOS?

IT'S NOT SO SILLY TO FIGHT DEATH!

I THINK SHE AGREES WITH ME!

SHE SEEMS LIKE A REASONABLE WOMAN.

SHUT UP.

DEATH, MY LOVE, DON'T YOU WANT HIM?

I GIVE HIM TO YOU!

LIFE CAN NEVER BE STRONGER THAN DEATH!

BUT... AM I BLIND BECAUSE I LOVE DEATH?

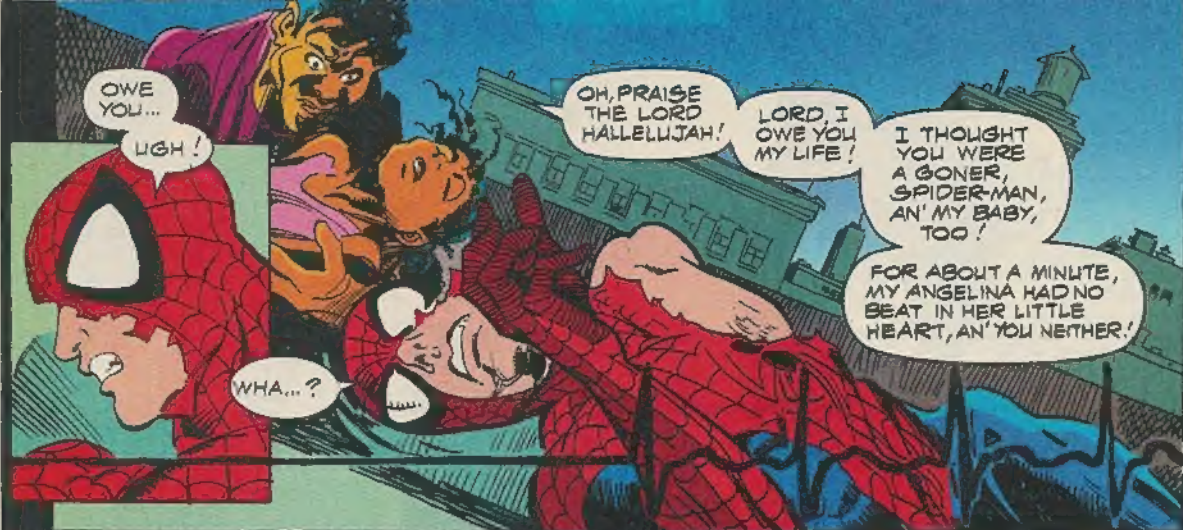
CAN I NEVER PLEASE YOU?

BUT, YOU UNDERSTAND THIS ISN'T FOR ME, BUT FOR THE LITTLE GIRL I FIGHT...

SO, YOU'RE LETTING ME GO?

UH, GREAT, BUT, UH... NO STRINGS, RIGHT?

I DON'T WANT TO OWE YOU ANYTHING.



OWE YOU...

UGH!

OH, PRAISE THE LORD HALLELUJAH!

LORD, I OWE YOU MY LIFE!

I THOUGHT YOU WERE A GONER, SPIDER-MAN, AN' MY BABY, TOO!

FOR ABOUT A MINUTE, MY ANGELINA HAD NO BEAT IN HER LITTLE HEART, AN' YOU NEITHER!

WHA...?



THEN YOU BOTH COME BACK TOGETHER.



GOSH, WHAT A WACKY FEELING I HAD. LIKE I LEFT MY BODY AND TRAVELLED!

IT HAPPENS, BOY, DON'T YOU QUESTION IT.

JUST TRUST.

WHAT ABOUT ALL THIS BLOOD?

BARBECUE SAUCE.

MAMA...




SHUSH, GIRL, YOU'RE IN GOD'S HANDS AGAIN.

MEET ME AT CITY HOSPITAL, MA'AM!

THE BARBECUE SAUCE! AUNT MAY WILL KILL ME!

I'M IN TROUBLE NOW! I'M DOOMED. I'M DEAD.

NEXT: ERIK LARSEN WRITES, PENCILS, AND INKS PART ONE OF: "THE REVENGE OF THE SINISTER SIX!"



HE HASN'T SPENT YEARS SAVING LIVES FOR NOTHING.

OR MAYBE HE HAS.

BUT IN LESS THAN A HEARTBEAT, SPIDER-MAN KNOWS MANY THINGS:

THAT HE BLEW THIS ONE.

THAT SOMETHING IN HIS STOMACH ROLLS OVER, AND HIS GUT LURCHES LIKE AN OVER-STUFFED SACK OF SINS.

THAT HE'S TOLD ONE JOKE TOO MANY; THAT HE'S JUST BURST OPEN HIS LIFE; THAT HE'S A BLUSTERING, OVERCONFIDENT, CAVALIER JOKESTER BUFFOON.

THAT SOMEBODY'S GOING TO DIE.

HE HEARS HIS OWN VOICE: "GET IN FRONT OF ME!" "I'LL PROTECT YOU!" HE HEARS HIS VOICE AS STRAINED, DESPERATE, AN OLD MAN'S THIN WHINE.

IN HIS HEAD, HE HEARS A HIGH CHILD'S PITCH SQUEAL: "HAVE NO FEAR, SPIDER-MAN'S HERE!"

ALL THIS, IN THE SPACE OF A HEARTBEAT, JUST BEFORE THE SKIN SPLITS OFF HIS FACE...

HIS LIPS AND GUMS ROLL BACK TO SPIT OUT THE SINS...

THE SINS HIS GUT, SO SICK OF ITSELF, HAS JUST CHICKED OUT...

AND IT TURNS INTO ONE RELENTLESS SCREAM...